Author	Title
Jennings, M.H., *et al.*	A History of the United Congregational-Christian Church (Chapel Hill, N.C.)

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

211 West Cameron Avenue
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

THE ORDER OF AFTERNOON WORSHIP

Four O'Clock May 15, 1960

Fiftieth Anniversary
Sunday

This Is The House Of God
Enter In Silence--Wait In Prayer
Worship In Reverence

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Prelude and Fugue" Bach
** *HYMN NO. 1 "Holy, Holy, Holy!"
*THE INVOCATION The Pastor
**
THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING
AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE CHARTER MEMBERS
by Dr. George E. Nicholson

Mr. R. W. Foister
Mr. D. T. Neville
Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Neville
Mrs. Robert S. Neville
Mrs. Harry Ollerhead

**
THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GREETINGS TO THE CHURCH
by Dr. Hilton Goulson
**
*THE SCRIPTURE
*THE LITANY OF REDEDICATION

Pastor: O God, who art present in all places of thy dominion to accept and further the services of all thy creatures; hear us, we humbly beseech thee, and by thy Holy Spirit reconsecrate this house which we here rededicate unto thee.
For the worship of thy holy Name;
For the ministry of the word;
For the administration of the sacraments;

The congregation warmly welcomes Dr. Earl Danieley to its pulpit this afternoon. Dr. Danieley is president of Elon College. In years gone by he served the Church as interim minister.

Dr. Hugh Hartshorne, on this anniversary occasion, represents for us the Congregational tradition, with which the Christian Churches merged in 1931. As a young man he was ordained by a Congregational Church. For many years he served as a distinguished professor in Yale University, a school established by Congregationalists.

Dr. George E. Nicholson is a member of the diaconate and of the anniversary committee. Dr. Hilton Goulson, also a member of the diaconate, served as chairman of the anniversary committee. Mr. Stein Basnight, Mr. M. H. Jennings, Jr., Mrs. John E. Larsh, Jr., Mr. Lindsay Neville, and Mrs. Raymond Strong were the other members of the committee.

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: For comfort to those who mourn;
For help to those who are tempted;
For strength to those who are weak;

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: For the blessing of the family;
For the guidance of childhood;
For the summoning of youth to a life of service;

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: For sympathy and fellowship with the needy;
For brotherhood with all men;
For the unity of all believers in Christ;

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: For aggression against evil;
For fostering civic righteousness;
For promoting peace and justice in all the earth;

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: For the sending forth of the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth;
For the giving of hope and courage to those that labor in the Lord;
For the consecration of life and service;

People: We rededicate this house.

Pastor: O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Father which art in heaven;

People: To thee we rededicate this house.

Pastor: O God, the Son, Saviour of the world, Head of the Church, Prophet, Priest, and King:

People: To thee we rededicate this house.

Pastor: O God, the Holy Spirit, Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comfortor, Lord and Giver of Life;

People: To thee we rededicate this house.

THE PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH (people seated) The Pastor
(A prayer of Walter Rauschenbusch's)
THE SOLO "It Is Enough" from Elijah Mendelssohn
Mr. Samuel H. Magill
"OUR PAST AND OUR FUTURE" Rev. Dr. Hugh Hartshorne
*HYMN NO. 405 "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"
THE ANNIVERSARY SERMON Rev. Dr. Earl Danieley

*HYMN NO. 399 "Onward Christian Soldiers"
*THE BENEDICTION The Pastor
THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "God Bless This House" Fischer

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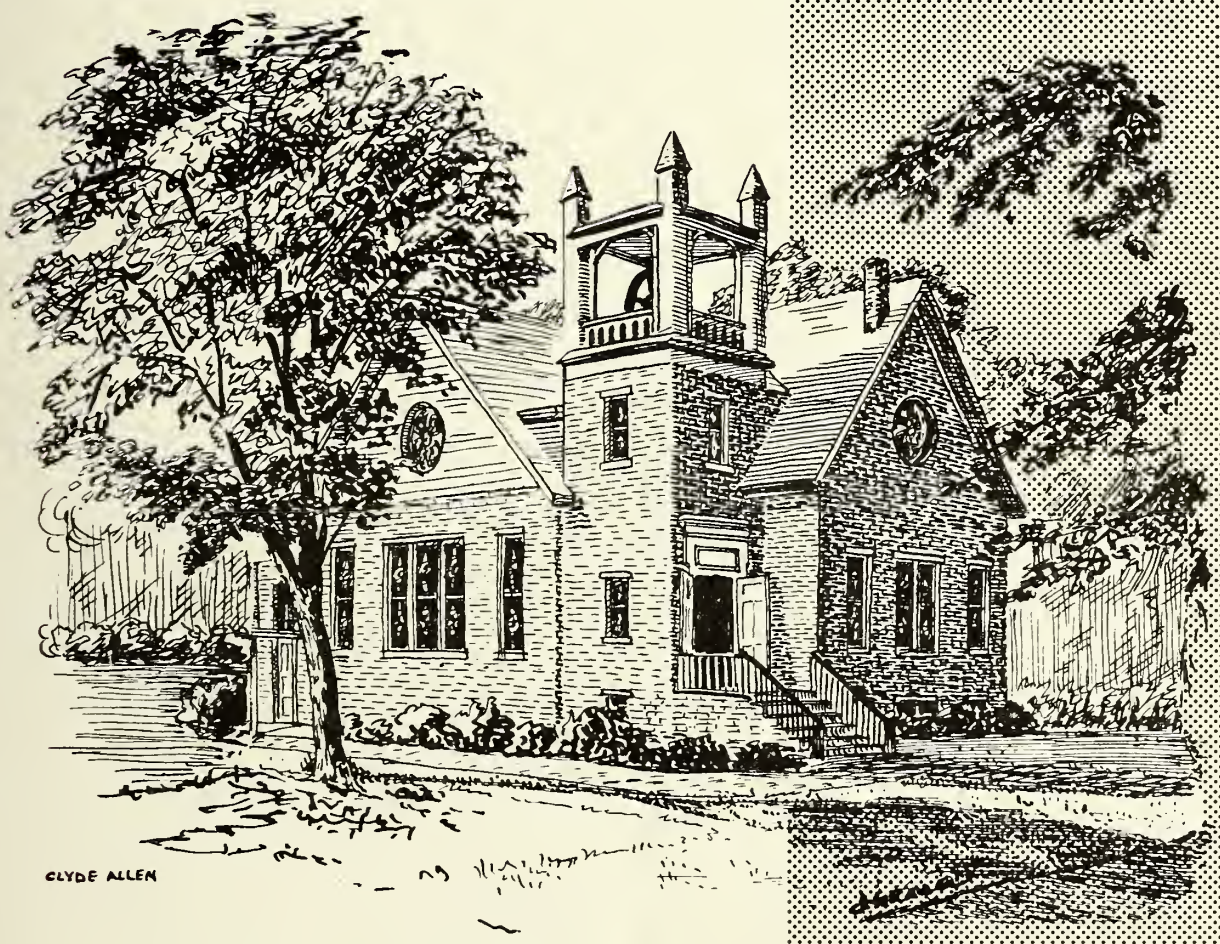
*The congregation is requested to stand.
**The ushers will seat those who are waiting.

You are cordially invited to attend the reception in honor of the charter members in Fellowship Hall following the service.

The flowers at the altar-table are given in commemoration of the Church's Golden Anniversary.

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS



211 West Cameron Avenue
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

A HISTORY

of the

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL-CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Compiled and edited by:
M. H. Jennings, Jr.
Lindsay Neville
Ruth Strong
Hilton Goulson

May 15, 1960

The United Congregational-Christian Church of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, has had a varied and interesting history, sometimes fraught with perplexities and problems, and sometimes lifted up by truly great experiences. It is known as the "Friendly Church" and draws its warmth and fellowship from both the people who make up the town of Chapel Hill and those who come and go with the changing times and seasons belonging to the University of North Carolina. This is an attempt to trace that history and with it to remember some of the personalities who helped to establish and mold this Church.

At the turn of the century, the Damascus Christian Church, located in a rural area west of Chapel Hill beyond the University Lake, served as a Community Center for the people living in that area. As the nearby communities of Venable (now Carrboro) and Chapel Hill began to grow, many people from the Damascus area moved into these communities in search of jobs and business opportunities. They returned to Damascus on Sunday to worship with their relatives and friends. It was on such an occasion that the idea for a Christian Church in Chapel Hill was started.

A "circuit-riding" minister, Rev. Mr. W. G. Clements, had conducted a Sunday worship service at Damascus and while walking back to Chapel Hill, was approached by Mr. E. W. Neville with the idea of forming a Christian Church in the college community. When asked what the potential in Chapel Hill might be, Mr. Neville informed Mr. Clements that there were approximately 40 members living in Chapel Hill and that unless something was done about a Christian Church immediately other church denominations in Chapel Hill would absorb these people. As the conversation went on, it was agreed that these people could build and support a Church in town.

Mr. Clements spent the night at the home of the E. W. Neville's, and much discussion went on during the evening concerning the forming of a new Church. Upon leaving the following morning by train, Mr. Clements said that he would approach the Church Conference on the matter and suggested that Mr. Neville seek out the prospective members. Mr. Neville's mission proved most rewarding, for all the people he approached gave whole-hearted support to the idea. The Church Conference shared the enthusiasm of the prospective members, and on February 22, 1910, the Conference appointed a committee to work out the final details. The Committee was composed of the following men: Mr. W. G. Clements, Rev. Mr. J. D. Wicker, Mr. I. W. Pritchard, Mr. W. E. Lindsay, and Mr. E. W. Neville. The five man committee met and elected the following officers: Mr. W. E. Lindsay, chairman, Mr. E. W. Neville, secretary, and Mr. I. W. Pritchard, treasurer. A membership drive was begun, and seventeen members went on the first official Church roster. Others said that they would contribute to the building of the Church, with the possibility of joining at a later date. The charter members were as follows: Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Neville, Mr. R. W. Foister, Miss Lizzie Neville (now Mrs. Harry Ollerhead), Mr. D. T. Neville, Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Neville, Miss Nora Williams, Mr. W. E. Lindsay, Mr. D. S. Long, Mrs. Ella O'Daniel, Mr. W. N. Cannada, Mr. James P. Foister, Miss Sally Crabtree, Rev. Mr. T. W. Strowd, Mrs. Jennie Partin, and Miss Lessie Neville.[1]

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1 Of these Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Neville, Mr. R. W. Foister, Mrs. Harry Ollerhead, Mr. D. T. Neville, and Mrs. Robert S. Neville are living to celebrate the Church's Golden Anniversary.

After much work and investigation, the Church Committee met with the congregation and made the following report: "We, your committee to select a church lot, have examined the lots for sale, suitable to build a Church on, and we recommend the lot on College Avenue (now Cameron Avenue) which is offered for sale by the T. J. Wilson heirs."[2]

On May 16, 1910, the Church members took their lamps to the unlighted Cannada School building on Pittsboro Street (now the site of the L. J. Phipps' residence) for an important meeting. Mr. Clements called the meeting to order, and among those giving reports were Dr. J. O. Atkinson, Mr. T. W. Strowd, Mr. I. W. Pritchard, and Mr. W. E. Lindsay. After much discussion a motion was made by Mr. E. W. Neville that as of that date, May 16, 1910, the Church be officially organized with seventeen charter members. The motion was seconded by Mr. W. E. Lindsay. Mr. T. W. Strowd was elected chairman of the newly formed Christian Church of Chapel Hill.

A building committee was formed, which was composed of Mr. R. W. Foister, Mr. E. W. Neville, Mr. I. W. Pritchard, Mr. T. W. Strowd, and Mr. D. S. Long. Mr. I. W. Pritchard reported that $500.00 had been received, $125 from the Church Conference and $375.00 from Mr. E. W. Neville for the purchase of the church building site.

The next four years were busy ones for the small devoted congregation. Meetings were held by the men and the Ladies' Aid Society, separately and

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2 From Mr. E. W. Neville's record.

jointly, in various homes. The Church construction proceeded slowly as the money came in and after four years and three months of work and determination, the little Church on Cameron Avenue held its first Service. On the fifth Sunday in August, 1914, the first Sunday School service was held with forty-nine persons in attendance. This was followed in the evening with the Special Service of Dedication. People of the community were invited to the long awaited affair, and ministers from other local Churches participated in the joyous occasion.

After the church building was completed, it became evident that a full-time pastor was needed, and Mr. T. W. Strowd became the first full-time minister. Many thanks went out to Mr. Clements, who had worked so diligently from 1910 until 1914, in helping the Church get its start. Mr. Strowd stayed one year, 1914-1915, with the Church. He was replaced the following year by Dr. W. S. Long, who lived in Chapel Hill after having retired as the first president of Elon College. Dr. Long served as pastor for one year, 1915-1916. In 1916 Rev. Mr. R. F. Brown served the Church for almost a year, when he resigned to move to Durham. Upon the termination of this pastorate, 1916-1917, the Church within three years had had a total of three ministers.

In 1917 one of the two longest pastorates in the Church's history began. In August of that year the Church invited Rev. Mr. B. J. Howard, who was living in Broadway, North Carolina, to become the Church's pastor. In the following November, Mr. and Mrs. Howard and their daughter, Ruth, moved to Chapel Hill. Church attendance during Mr. Howard's earlier years varied, but it was not unusual to see fifty or more faces in the congregation on Sunday mornings.

Some of the "backbone" families of these earlier years in the Church were the Nevilles, the Sidney Longs, the Skyler Longs, the I.W. Pritchards, the Will Lindsays, and the Sam Pickards. "Mr. Sam", as Mr. Pickard was affectionately called, owned a butcher shop on Franklin Street (now the site of THE HUB). Mr. and Mrs. Howard recall how he used to let them know when he received a supply of fresh meat and would share it with them, often refusing payment. There were several children in Mr. Pickard's family. One daughter, Pearl, was married to P. R. "Bud" Perry, and they both attended Church regularly. Another daughter, Mamie, was a student at Elon College at the time, but she returned to Chapel Hill and married a fine young man by the name of Grady Leonard, who was attending the University. Mr. Howard performed the wedding ceremony. Mamie and Grady Leonard had two daughters, Jane and Ann, and the thread of history in the little Church on Cameron Avenue was weaving its pattern, for it was in this Church years later that both Jane and Ann were married, Jane to Reid Suggs and Ann to Monk Jennings. They are active members of the Church today.

In early 1920 Mr. Howard felt that the Church needed financial backing from the Mission Board in order to survive. He also felt that due to his lack of experience and the fact that he wanted more education, the Church might possibly get the financial aid from the Mission Board that it so sorely needed if he resigned. The Church recalled Mr. R. F. Brown, who had preceded Mr. Howard. Mr. Brown, who had been serving a Church in Durham, stayed less than a year, and in November, 1920 Mr. Howard was again recalled from Broadway, N. C. to become pastor of the Church.

Mr. Howard served the Church for seven more consecutive years, and during this period the Church moved gradually along. The Church parsonage was completed, and Mr. Howard and his family were the first to occupy the home at 232 Mc Cauley Street. A pipe organ was purchased from the Chapel Hill Baptist Church and installed in the Church sanctuary, and Mrs. J. M. Williams became the first Church organist -- a position she held for many years.

The first Church expansion occurred during this period with the addition of the Church "hut". Mr. Grady Leonard secured the hut, which had been a workman's building during the construction of Kenan Stadium, from the University. The hut was moved to the lot back of the Church. Eight hundred dollars was needed to put the hut in serviceable condition; therefore, the ladies of the Church came to the rescue and borrowed the needed money from Mr. Lueco Lloyd. They worked and repaid the loan by holding suppers and bake sales in the hut, which for many years served the Church in many ways. All meetings, except the regular Sunday morning worship services, were held there, along with many covered-dish dinners. Various Sunday School classes also met there.

Mr. Howard again resigned the pastorate in 1927, but returned in less than a year to serve for three more years. During these years the Christian Churches united with Congregational Churches to form the Congregational-Christian denomination, and the local congregation changed its name from Christian to United Congregational-Christian Church.

Upon Mr. Howard's resignation in 1931, Rev. Mr. C. R. Dierlam became pastor. He remained a short time and returned to Ohio, later retiring near Sanford, North Carolina, where he lives at the present time.

Dr. W. J. McKee served as Church pastor from 1933 until 1943 and continued to teach a Bible Class each Sunday until 1950. He is now retired and lives in Rutherfordton, North Carolina.

During the depression years, Dr. McKee, while teaching at the University, did a yeoman's job as minister to the Church. He taught Sunday School, delivered the sermons, called on the sick and needy, and, as a former Church Treasurer stated, "He did all things asked of a minister, and I wrote many a check to him for the amount of $8.00 per week." Other people connected with the University during the twenties and thirties also played an important part in the Church's existence. Mr. Thad Eure, now Secretary of State for N. C., was active in the Church as a student. Dr. Harold D. Meyer, on the University faculty, taught Sunday School classes for years.

It is quite obvious that the Church during the thirties had great financial difficulties, and it was mainly through the untiring and devoted efforts of such persons as Dr. McKee that the Church fought its way through those lean years. There were also members of the congregation who struggled to hold the Church together during this period: Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Neville, Mrs. Otis Neville, Mr. and Mrs. P. R. Perry, Mr. and Mrs. Stein Basnight, Mr. and Mrs. Hector Mattox, Mr. and Mrs. Luke Conners, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Smith, and others mentioned previously.

In 1943 Rev. Mr. Johnson Griffin became pastor of the Church, but left in 1944 to become a Chaplain in the Armed Forces. In 1945, Rev. Mr. Greg Ritchie and his family moved into the parsonage on McCauley Street. It was during this period that an influx of younger people took place as many were returning from the War, marrying and becoming active in Church

life. This seemed to give the Church a "shot-in-the-arm" and activities were plentiful and numerous among the young adults. In the late forties, the hut and area in front were the scenes of many energetic young adults as they played ping-pong, Badminton, soccer, horse-shoes, and croquet. This was often done at night as the young adult group had worked to light the outside grounds. In the middle forties, the hut had its official dedication and was dedicated in honor and memory of the man who had gotten the hut for the Church -- Mr. Grady Leonard.

Many who meant so much to the Church during the first few years after the War were back to complete their education; consequently, their stay in the Church was short-lived. Kay and Bill Sharpe, Albert and Eunice Lovejoy, Ruth and Ray Andes, Gales and Inez Perry, to mention just a few, were young couples who did much to help the Church during this period.

In 1947 Mr. Ritchie left the Church and Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Munger moved into the parsonage. It was during the pastorate of Mr. Munger that the Church began to move forward in growth and development. The Church membership was 40 when Mr. Munger came to Chapel Hill, but, when he left three years later, the membership had nearly doubled and the first big re-development program of the Church was getting under way. The principal objectives of this program were the acquisition of a new Church organ and the redecoration of the Church sanctuary.

Although Mr. Munger did not stay to see these many things come to pass, he did, nevertheless, instill a spirit of hope and determination into many members of the congregation. He gave them a feeling that the Church had stood still long enough and was now ready to move forward. He left Chapel Hill in 1950 to take a teaching job in Memphis, Tennessee.

For a period of time, the Church was without a pastor, but a young lay preacher, teaching Chemistry at the University, filled the pulpit and served as part-time minister to the Church. This young man was Dr. Earl Danieley, now president of Elon College.

An unprecedented period of growth and development in the Church began in the fall of 1951. On October 21 of that year Rev. Mr. Richard L. Jackson was installed as minister. He was graduated from Yale Divinity School, served four years as pastor of a Church in Virginia, and came to Chapel Hill from Shaown, China, where he had been a missionary for six years.

Many wonderful things happened to the Church during the next five years: the parsonage was redecorated at an expense of $1,750.00, a new organ was installed in the Church, and the Church itself received a long-needed "face-lifting". When Mr. Jackson came to Chapel Hill, the Church had 70 members; three years later, the Church had 187 members.

The year, 1954, saw a truly great thing happen to the Church. Due to the tremendous growth in the membership, the congregation realized that the old plant was inadequate to handle the growing congregation. The idea of building on to the present structure was considered, but many people felt the Church could not come up with $20,000 to $30,000. Mr. Jackson seems to have been the only one who had no doubt at all.

On Sunday afternoon, December 12, 1954, after a week of nightly meetings under the direction and guidance of Mr. Le Roy Eide from the Board of Home Missions, 25 men from the Church called on members of the Church in an attempt to raise $20,000.00 for

the proposed new addition. As the canvassers came back to the Church for their final reports, it was a most joyous occasion for many, because it had become apparent as the men came in that the drive would meet its goal. It not only met the goal, but went over by more than a thousand dollars. Bill Alexander, in his final report to the Mission Board, had this to say: "On Sunday, after a moving and beautiful service in our Church, the men making the canvas calls had dinner and a final meeting with Mr. Eide. Just before we started out to make our calls, a group picture was taken that shows far more than mere photography usually reveals. It shows what was in the hearts of the canvassers. It is a picture of a group of vitally alive and dedicated men. Everyone in the group looks completely happy and at peace with himself. Each one seems to be saying, 'I am doing something for others and it's a truly great feeling'. Nearly every man that has seen it has exclaimed, 'Why that's the best picture I have ever seen of myself.'"

Mr. Jackson, due to the health of his parents and feeling he should be near them, returned in 1956 to his home town in Ohio. His departure marked the end of an outstanding period in the history of the United Church in Chapel Hill.

For a while once again the Church was without a pastor, and Rev. Mr. Samuel H. Magill, a member of the Church, filled the pulpit often.

In 1957 Rev. Mr. Harvey L. Carnes was invited to become pastor. Mr. and Mrs. Carnes and their children came from Franklin, Virginia to serve the Church for two years. During this time the dreams of many were realized: the new Fellowship Hall was formally dedicated. Mr. Jackson returned for this occasion, and Mr. B. J. Howard, who worked strenuously and faithfully for the Church in its early

years, took part in the service of dedication.

After the departure of Mr. Carnes, the Church invited Rev. Mr. DeWitt L. Myers, Jr. to become interim pastor in April, 1959. At the time he was completing the requirements for the Master of Theology degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The following July the Church asked him to accept the pastorate. He agreed and was installed in October, 1959.

The Church continues to grow, both in body and in spirit. On May 15, 1960, the Church celebrates its Fiftieth Anniversary, aspiring to make the next fifty years even more exciting and stimulating in God's work than the past fifty.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Minister -- DeWitt L. Myers, Jr.
Moderator -- Lindsay Neville
Asst. Moderator -- William Cherry
Clerk -- Mrs. Dale Evarts
Treasurer -- Warren Morris
Choir Director -- William G. Sasser
Church Organist -- Mrs. William G. Sasser

Board of Trustees:

Tom Peyton -- Chairman
A. C. Shearer -- Co-chairman
James R. Ellis
Philip Green
John Larsh
Clyde Umphlett

Board of Deacons:

E. U. Bain -- Chairman
Stein Basnight (Honorary)
Mrs. William Cherry
Hilton Goulson
B. J. Howard (Honorary)
Ralph Long
Sam Magill
Mrs. D. D. Marley
George Nicholson
P. R. Perry (Honorary)
Jim Pinney
Wilbur Senter
Reid Suggs
Mrs. Nan Watts

Chairman, Christian Education - Mrs. Reid Suggs
Superintendent, Church School - Mrs. Hilton Goulson
Chairman, Finance Committee - Ray Strong
Chairman, Membership - Mrs. A. C. Shearer
Chairman, Music - Mrs. Edgar Alden
Southern Convention Representative - Stein Basnight
Chairman, United Student Fellowship -- Mrs. Sam Magill
Delegates, E.N.C. Conference and Southern Convention - Mrs. Stein Basnight, Mrs. E. U. Bain, Mrs. J. R. Ellis, Hugh Hartshorne

Church Directory (continued)

President, Men's Fellowship - D. D. Marley
President, Women's Fellowship - Mrs. Tom Peyton
President, Pilgrim Fellowship - Rusty Edmister
President, Student Fellowship - Mark Thelin

Ad Hoc Committees:

Constitution Revision - Linwood T. Peoples
Church Brochure - W. D. Basnight
50th Anniversary - Hilton Goulson

Boy Scout Troop # 835 Representatives:

E. J. Owens - - - - - Ray Strong

The members of the 50th Anniversary Committee are:

Stein Basnight
Hilton Goulson
M. H. Jennings, Jr.
Mrs. John E. Larsh, Jr.
Lindsay Neville
George Nicholson
Mrs. Raymond Strong